Hume City Council
gardens for wildlife

Seedlings for Schools

Gardens connecting people and wildlife together

Bird Bush Box

Flora of Hume

HUME CITY COUNCIL

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung Willam Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land.

Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and to Elders past, present and future.

For your information

If you would like help to identify native plants or find out about how you can help protect and enhance native vegetation, contact the Sustainability Engagement team on 9205 2200.

Contact us

Attn: Gardens for Wildlife
Hume City Council
PO Box 119, Dallas, VIC. 3047

1079 Pascoe Vale Road, Broadmeadows, VIC. 3047

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Hume City Council is an affiliate of the Gardens for Wildlife Victoria Network

HUME CITY COUNCIL

Contents

Overview

Hume City Council donates indigenous seedlings to schools to beautify the school grounds, create outdoor classrooms, provide more shade, and enhance the habitat for local wildlife. Children are provided with opportunities to connect with nature, work as a team on a worthwhile project, and learn about the local environment.

Seedlings for Schools

Since 2014, over 55,000 seedlings have been given to schools in Hume City. More than 80 percent of schools have been involved at least once, with several schools applying each year.

Indigenous Plants

Indigenous species of flora are adapted to the region's soils and climatic conditions. These local plants are well-suited to growing in clay soils and can cope with hot, dry summers.

Historically, Hume City was once covered by native grasslands and open grassy woodlands. Many indigenous plants therefore prefer to be in positions with full sun to part shade, and will not grow as well in full shade conditions.

Australia's unique fauna evolved with local native plants, so rely on them for food and shelter. By planting indigenous species in our gardens, parks, streetscapes, and at schools, we provide much-needed wildlife habitat and ecological connectivity for biodiversity gains.

We can also grow plants important to First Nations Peoples, as numerous species are used for food, fibre, medicine and tools, or have other cultural heritage values.

Flora Conservation Status

Much of the native vegetation has been cleared across Hume City, due to farming and urban development. As new suburbs are built, Nature Conservation Reserves are set aside to protect native vegetation, with over 100 sites managed by Council.

Flora surveys conducted in the reserves have recorded some 990 plant species, including exotics (non-native species). More than 210 indigenous species are at risk of regional extinction with only one to five wild populations left in Hume City.

Conserve rare and threatened indigenous plants by including them in our gardens.

It is illegal to take indigenous plants from the wild, without a permit from the state government and permission from the land owner/manager. A limit must be placed on harvesting seed and propagation materials from vulnerable wild populations. Instead we can use seeds or cuttings collected from our gardens to grow more plants, and hopefully share them with other people.

Bird Bush Box

A diversity of plants will support a wide range of birds in your garden. Have at least one tall indigenous tree to provide birds with shelter, sites to nest, roosts to sleep, and perches to fly from to catch their prey. Plants that flower will attract nectar-feeding birds, along with a host of insects that many birds also feed on. Seeds and fruits are highly sought after seasonal sources of food. Mulched garden beds bring in yet more insects, contributing to the healthy food web needed for predatory birds to thrive.

Having a cat-safe bird bath is the easiest way to attract birds, such as being up on a pedestal or a saucer hanging from a branch or beam. Placing bird baths near a dense shrub enables small birds to dart away from bully birds. Have a wedge-shaped rock in the bowl for small birds to choose the depth of water they feel comfortable in, and put sticks into ponds to help wildlife escape drowning.

Install nest boxes for hollow dependent birds, while a bird nesting material station can also help birds breed. Bread and other human food is bad for birds' health; please do not feed wildlife as it is quite harmful in several ways.

Flora of Hume

The following plant factsheets are grouped by form or growth habit. Each botanical name is linked to the Flora of Victoria website for more information. Learn to identify these plants, consider how big they grow and where to plant them, plus how to collect their seed, and maintain them in your garden.

Planting tips & caring for the seedlings

Follow these tips for a great planting technique, giving the seedlings the best chance to survive and grow.

Water your seedlings well or soak the forestry tubes in a bucket before planting

Watering will help get the seedling out of the tube, and keep the root ball and soil together.

Dig a "Goldilocks" hole

Check the hole is deep enough, and not too deep, by putting the plastic forestry tube in the hole. The top of the potting mix in the tube should be level with the surrounding ground. Avoid having the seedling sit too high up with roots exposed, or too low down with stem smothered.

Breathe on your seedling

Sing or talk to your seedlings. They will absorb the carbon dioxide you breathe out.

All plants photosynthesize. They combine water and carbon dioxide to make simple sugars and release oxygen. The carbon from your body is used by the seedling to grow.

What was part of you is now part of the seedling; you are connected on an atomic level!

Massage your seedling in the forestry tube

Firmly squeeze the opposite corners of the square forestry tube together. Squeeze at the bottom and at top of the tube. Squeeze the other corners and all the sides of the tube too.

Gently remove your seedling from the forestry tube

Make a V with two fingers. Place a finger either side of the seedling. Then tip the forestry tube upside down and give a firm, hard shake. The seedling's roots in the potting soil should slide out of the tube into the palm of your hand. Try to keep this root ball in the soil intact.

If the seedling doesn't easily come out, check if there are roots growing out the bottom of the tube. Tear these roots off the bottom if you need to.

Massage the corners of the tube firmly again. Try more hard shakes to get the seedling out.

Or lightly grasp the seedling stem between your two fingers and gently pull on the seedling as your other hand squeezes the corners of the tube. Gently wriggle the seedling out.

Tuck your seedling into the hole

Push loose dirt into any gaps around the seedling and fill up the hole. Make sure all the roots are covered up. Mound up some dirt in a ring around the seedling.

Water your seedling

Water gently so the dirt doesn't get washed away from the roots. The mounded ring of dirt can help dam the water. Let the water soak in slowly to help settle the dirt in around the roots.

Mulch your seedlings

Cover the ground with mulch to help retain soil moisture, reduce weeds and feed the soil. Use a bark chip or leaf litter bush mulch up to 10 centimetres thick around woody plants like trees and shrubs. For more delicate wildflowers and grasses, mulch with sugar cane or straw.

Care for your seedlings

Water your newly planted seedlings a couple of times a week for the first month at least.

Remove any weeds that grow near them. Prune the plants after they finish flowering.

Feed the plants with a liquid fertiliser, slow release fertiliser pellets formulated for natives, or add a ring of compost or weathered manures around the seedling.

Symbols & Gardens for Wildlife recipe

Form or growth habit

- **Trees**
- **Shrubs**
- **Wildflowers**
- **Grasses**
- **Herbs**
- **Sedges**
- **Groundcover**
- **Climbers**

Amount of light required

- **Full Sun**
- **Part Shade**
- **Full Shade**

Wildlife attracted

- **Birds**
- **Butterflies**
- **Bees**
- **Frogs**
- **Lizards**
- **Mammals**

The Gardens for Wildlife program has a simple recipe of ingredients to create a wildlife-friendly garden:

- Layer plants using various forms or growth habits as upper, mid and ground-storey.
- Include a native canopy tree, plus prickly or dense shrubs for small birds to shelter in.
- Blue-flowering plants for native bees; daisies for adult butterflies; grasses for caterpillars.
- Use a diversity of plant species, with long flowering periods or that flower at different times of the year, followed by seeds or fruits as other food sources.
- Have multiples of the same plant species to increase the resources available.
- Provide sources of water like a bird bath, fish pond, frog bog, or saucers on the ground.
- Install habitat features such as bee hotels, lizard lounges, or nest boxes for extra shelter and sites for wildlife to rear their young.
- Mulch garden beds to attract soil-foraging insects, as the basis of a healthy food web.
- Consider having other sustainability features such as compost bins, worm farms, rainwater tanks, productive food gardens, fruit trees, chickens, and/or solar panels.
- Be a responsible pet owner and keep cats contained indoors or in a cat-run.

Lightwood or Hickory Wattle

Acacia implexa

Identification

A slender, straight tree and the mature canopy can be sparse. Rough, grey-brown bark covers the trunk, with the surface divided into a mosaic pattern. Has dull green leaves that are sickle-shaped with three slightly-raised main veins. The flowers are creamy-yellow and spherical, growing in profuse clusters. The seeds mature in twisted seed-pods for about 11 months and ripen before the next flowering. Is moderately long-lived; more than 15 years.

Status in Hume City

Common in dry exposed areas, such as escarpments, stony rises, and in Red Gum or Box grassy woodlands. Widespread across Hume City and occurs in over 70 reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•	•	•								•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•

Size

High: 6 metre - 10 metre
Wide: 3 metre - 6 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

The leaves used for dyeing and the bark for tanning. The fibres produce twine, while the hard wood is perfect for making a variety of tools.

Planting Advice

- An attractive, fast-growing, long-lived screen or shade tree and is very hardy. Useful for erosion control and in windbreaks.
- The light crown allows light through for understorey or layered plantings, including shrubs, clumping plants, and groundcovers.
- Provides food for insect-eating and seed-eating birds.
- Resents pruning, and will sucker if pruned severely or if the roots are damaged.
- Drought tolerant. Is adaptable and can tolerant dry or moist soils.

Drooping Sheoak

Allocasuarina verticillata

Identification

A small to medium tree with long greyish-green needle-like foliage, similar to that of a pine tree, where the branchlets droop down. The leaves are actually the tiny teeth that form the pale rings around the branchlet. The dark bark on the trunk is deeply furrowed. There are female and male plants, distinguished by the female plants having the woody cylindrical cones. From March to December, small yellow to brown tassel-like flowers form on the end of branchlets of male plants. This slow-growing tree has a lifespan of 40 to 80 years.

Status in Hume City

Recorded in over 50 reserves, and is usually found on rocky rises and in along the escarpments of most of Hume City's creeks.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•

Size

High: 4 metre - 10 metre
Wide: 3 metre - 6 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

The leaves and young cones are chewed raw to alleviate thirst. The wood is used to make boomerangs, shields and clubs. Known as singing trees for the sighing sound as wind moves through them. While mothers forage for food they leave their babies by the trunks of female trees, as the fallen prickly cones are thought to keep snakes away.

Planting Advice

- Do not plant within three metres of pipes or gutters as needles can clog drains.
- Collect mature cones when they turn grey-brown and leave in a warm spot until the winged papery seeds drop out of the valves. Easy to germinate with fresh seeds, but loses viability quickly once released from the cones (store at cold temperatures to delay loss of seed viability).
- Cones are a food source for cockatoos, galahs, and other parrots.
- Prefers well-drained soils.
- Drought tolerant.

Silver Banksia

Banksia marginata

Identification

With an extremely variable growth form, they can grow as a large shrub or a small dense tree. The dark green, stiff leaves are silvery on the underside. Forms distinct cylindical flower spikes, ten centimetres long by five centimetres wide, that are pale silvery-yellow to bright yellow and honey-scented. Papery seed is shed when mature from the brown, hairy cones. Is a long-lived species.

Status in Hume City

A tree form once found on the basalt plains has disappeared from much of its former distribution across south-western Victoria. This species occurs at more than ten reserves and is commonly used in Council's indigenous revegetation projects.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•

Size

High: 4 metre - 8 metre
Wide: 1 metre - 5 metre

Smaller growth form found on basalt plain escarpments.

Indigenous Cultural Use

Nectar-rich flowers can be used to make a sweet drink. Dried flowers heads also used to strain drinking water.

Planting Advice

- Bushy forms make excellent screening plants. Great tree for small suburbian gardens.
- Cut flowers keep well.
- Nectar-rich flowers attract all kinds of pollinators including honeyeaters, parrots, possums, sugar gliders, fruit bats, and various insects. Seed cones are eaten by black cockatoos. Bushy form provides shelter for small birds and other wildlife.
- Propagates easily from cuttings. Only use fresh seed.
- Excess phosphorus will damage or kill this plant. Iron deficiency shows as yellow leaves with green veins. To rectify, feed with iron chelate.
- Drought tolerant, however splotchy yellowing of leaves is a sign of drought stress.
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils.

River Bottlebrush

Callistemon sieberi

Identification

Grows either as a large, open shrub or a small tree with branches that hang down. The stiff, leathery, narrow, green leaves can have silvery or bronze-coloured new growth. Classic bottlebrush flowers range from a cream to light pink colour, growing to eight centimetres long, and form on the end of branches. Sheds fine seed from clusters of woody fruits that have three to four valves.

Status in Hume City

As the comon name suggests, typically grows along waterways, usually close to the water and in areas prone to flooding. Often used in riparian plantings and has been recorded living in 40 reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•								•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•

Size

High: 2 metre - 5 metre
Wide: 2 metre - 3 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

Nectar rich flowers can be used to make a sweet drink.

Planting Advice

- Makes excellent screening and hedging plants, or grows in containers. Good in windbreaks, boggy areas or around ponds.
- Is quick growing.
- Prolific, long-lasting, nectar-rich flowers attract birds like honeyeaters, as well as insect-feeding birds Bushy growth provides shelter for small birds.
- Propagates easily from semi-hard cuttings or from seed.
- Requires regular pruning. Can tolerate severe pruning to retain bushy growth, while tip pruning finished flowers encourages more flowering.
- Readily grows in a variety of soils and positions, particularly heavy clay soils. Tolerates wet, poorly-drained soils. Can also cope with extended dry periods.
- Is frost tolerant.

Rock Correa, Smooth Correa

Correa glabra

Identification

A small, bushy shrub with slender spreading branches and shiny, dark green, roundish to oblong-shaped leaves. The slender, tubular, yellow-green flowers are bell-like and two to three centimetres long, hanging from short stems throughout the bush. Flowering peaks in winter and spring, but flowers can sporadically appear over summer and autumn too. Has variable growth forms and can hybridise with *Correa reflexa*.

Status in Hume City

Widespread in the northern Melbourne region and is mostly found in streamside vegetation and rocky areas. Occurs naturally in over ten Nature Conservation Reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seed Collection											•	

Size

High: 1 metre - 2 metre
Wide: 1 metre - 3 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

No known indigenous cultural uses.

Planting Advice

- An attractive shrub, easily grown and very hardy. Ideal as a low screen or in dry-shady sites under trees. Grows in containers.
- Tolerates pruning and can be clipped into formal low hedges. Pinch out new growth to retain a dense compact habit.
- An indigenous species to use instead of English Box.
- Long flowering period and provides winter resources. Nectar-rich flowers are bird attracting, including honeyeaters and insect-feeding birds. Also attracts pollinating insects.
- Grow from cuttings.
- Prefers well-drained moist soils.
- Drought, frost and limestone tolerant.

Rosemary Grevillea

Grevillea rosmarinifolia

Identification

A dense, rounded, perennial shrub with a variable growth habit, as there are several local forms and has also been widely cultivated, where cultivars may vary slightly to indigenous specimens. Has stiff, prickly, narrow leaves and bears clusters of curved, pink and cream, tubular flowers throughout the bush.

Status in Hume City

Naturally found on stony knolls and in escarpment shrublands. Is rare, though occurs in the grasslands of Kalkallo and near Moonee Ponds Creek. Planted in several Nature Conservation Reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering						•	•	•	•	•	•	
Seed Collection	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	•

Size

High: 0.3 metre - 2 metre
Wide: 0.3 metre - 1.5 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

No known indigenous cultural uses.

Planting Advice

- Great hedging species that provides screening.
- Dense and prickly foliage is excellent habitat for small birds. Flowers attract nectar-feeding birds.
- Attracts butterflies and is a food plant for caterpillars. Provides cover and shelter for other wildlife.
- Long flowering period for most of the year, peaking in winter and spring. Prune back after flowering to promote dense growth.
- Caution: Note that the prickly foliage can irritate some people's skin.
- Propagate from cuttings (hard tips), as purity of species is mixed from seed. Seed scarification required to propagate from seed.
- Drought tolerant and frost tolerant.
- Prefers well-drained soils.

Fragrant Saltbush, Mealy Saltbush

Rhagodia parabolica

Identification

A dense, low-growing and spreading shrub with silvery grey-green leaves. The tiny, white flowers that appear in spring are fairly nondescript, but are very fragrant as referred to in its common name. The flowers are followed with bright red clusters of berries to three millimeters wide in late spring and summer.

Status in Hume City

Is now rare across Melbourne, limited to a few isolated rocky gorges in the north west. Mostly found around Sunbury on rocky slopes and ridges. Extensively used in revegetation projects across Hume City and occurs in over 20 Nature Conservation Reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•						•	•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•						•	•	•

Size

High: 1 metre - 2 metre
Wide: 1 metre - 2 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

Leaves are edible after boiling to remove the excess salt and taste like spinach, but they may need to be cooked for a while to become tender. The berries are also edible.

Planting Advice

- Use as a screen or in a windbreak. Makes a great formal or informal hedge, with attractive ornamental silvery foliage. Prune to promote bushy growth. Is a very hardy species.
- Easy to propagate by seed using fresh fruit and by cuttings.
- Great habitat plant, providing shelter and the berries are eaten by lizards, small birds and small mammals. Butterfly attracting and caterpillar host plant.
- Drought and fire tolerant. Moderately frost tolerant.
- Prefers dry, well-drained soils.

Common Everlasting Daisy

Chrysocephalum apiculatum

Identification

A perennial wildflower that is quite variable in form. Can be a dense spreading (prostrate) groundcover to an erect small shrub, with different sized leaves and flowers. It generally has grey-green, hairy leaves and bears bright-yellow clusters of daisy flowers on the ends of short stems. Ripe seed appears like fluff on the old flowerheads and when collecting, it will come away with a light brush of a finger.

Status in Hume City

Still common and widespread as occurs in various vegetation types, including grasslands, woodlands, and forests. Is located in over 20 Nature Conservation Reserves and can be found in Broadmeadows Valley Park, Sunbury, and Wildwood.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•							•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•								•	•

Size

High: 10 - 30 centimetre
Wide: 50 centimetre - 1 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

No known indigenous cultural uses.

Planting Advice

- Great anywhere in the garden including pots, borders, rockeries and under trees. A popular indigenous plant with landscapers.
- Provides cut flowers for floral arrangements.
- Has a long-flowering period, and removing old flower heads will encourage more flowering and denser growth.
- Attracts butterflies, insects, and insect-eating birds, lizards and frogs. Provides shelter and cover for wildlife.
- Can be propagated by seed or cuttings.
- Drought and frost tolerant.
- Prefers well-drained soils.

Native Flax

Linum marginale

Identification

A short-lived, slender, upright perennial herb with thick tuberous roots. Narrow, linear leaves to two centimetres long are attached directly to unbranched stems. Dainty blue flowers, with five petals that have darker blue veins and white anthers, are clustered together on the end of stems. Greenish-brown sesame-like seeds can be collected from the round papery capsules once they begin to open, and the capsules will mature up the flowering stems.

Status in Hume City

Found in a range of vegetation types including grasslands, grassy woodlands and riparian areas along waterways. Has been recorded in over ten Nature Conservation Reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•	•						•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•

Size

High: 30 - 80 centimetre
Wide: 30 - 50 centimetre

Indigenous Cultural Use

The abundant seed can be eaten raw or made into a dough to be cooked. The fibres from the flax stems make cord and fishing nets.

Planting Advice

- This hardy plant grows well in rock gardens and in pots, or looks great mass planted. It has a long flowering period over spring and summer.
- Is propagated easily and will spread readily by seed.
- Prune old growth back hard in autumn to encourage new growth from the base rootstock over winter.
- Suitable for wet sites like frog bogs. Attracts seed-eating birds and a variety of native pollinating insects.
- Drought tolerant once established.
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils.

Spreading or Black-anther Flax-lily

Dianella revoluta (Syn. *D. admixta*)

Identification

This perennial tufting plant spreads by rhizomes to form dense clumps of upright blue-green, strap-like leaves to 70 centimetres long. Each leaf has a central mid-rib to its pointed tip. Clusters of bright blue to violet flowers with six petals, 15 millimetres across, have yellow stamens and black anthers. The sprays of flower are carried on branching, wiry stems to one metre tall. Shiny, rounded, fleshy, dark-blue berries contain numerous small black seeds.

Status in Hume City

Common in Hume City and found in over 50 reserves, mostly in grassy woodlands and plains grasslands. Several other ***Dianella*** species are also present, including the threatened ***D. amoena***.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•								•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•								•	•	•

Size

High: 40 centimetre - 1 metre
Wide: 20 centimetre - 1 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

Leaves split and twisted together to make a strong string and used in basket-making. The blue berries produce dyes. Conflicting references exist about whether the fruit is edible, with some authors cautioning that the fruit is poisonous. The roots can be cooked and eaten.

Planting Advice

- Very hardy, long-lived, attractive plant growing well in rockeries, containers, and under trees.
- Long flowering and fruiting period.
- Indigenous species to plant instead of ***Agapanthus***.
- Propagates most easily by lifting and dividing the clumps of rhizomes.
- Attracts pollinating insects, while some birds eat the fruit and seeds. Blue Banded Bees love ***Dianella!***
- Tolerates heavy clay soils.
- Drought tolerant once established. Frost and limestone tolerant.

Spiny-headed Mat-rush, Basket Grass

Lomandra longifolia

Identification

This spreading, perennial, tufting plant forms dense clumps of bright-green, strap-like leaves to one metre long. Each leaf is flattened with two to three teeth at the apex of the tip. There are male and female flowering plants with honey-scented cream-coloured spikes. Shiny brown capsules are held for most of year.

Status in Hume City

Naturally found growing along waterways and escarpments. Still widespread and populations occur in over 40 Nature Conservation Reserves. Is one of the most commonly-used landscape plants in parks and gardens.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•						•	•	•	•

Size

High: 50 centimetre - 1 metre
Wide: 50 centimetre - 1 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

Leaves beaten and soaked to separate fibres, or soften by drawing through hot ashes, to make a strong string for net-bags. Leaves also twisted and woven together into mats, baskets, eel-traps and many other useful items. Nectar-rich flowers and white leaf bases are edible. Some Aboriginal groups grind the seeds into flour.

Planting Advice

- Incredibly versatile and hardy plant, that is suitable in rockeries, containers, and under trees. Perfumed flowers and floral art.
- Spreads with robust rhizomes. Propagate from fresh seed.
- Excellent habitat plant for caterpillars, seed-eating birds and insect-eating birds. Also provides cover and shelter for lizards and frogs.
- Tolerates heavy clay to sandy soils. Frost and smog tolerant.
- Drought tolerant and can tolerate temporary inundation.

Common Tussock Grass

Poa labillardierei

Identification

A large tussock grass that forms a clump with long, coarse, green to blue-green leaves, that dry to a straw colour. In spring and summer, carries open plume-like flowers, with a green or purplish tinge on the spreading branches. Mature seed is easy to collect as comes loose by lightly running pinched fingers up stems towards the tips.

Status in Hume City

Widespread in grasslands, grassy woodlands, grassy wetlands and riparian zones. One of Hume's most common indigenous species being recorded in over 75 Nature Conservations Reserves and is frequently used in landscaping.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•								•

Size

High: 50 centimetre - 1.2 metre
Wide: 50 centimetre - 1.5 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

Seed collected as food plant to make flour and dough. Leaves make a strong twine, then turned into nets and traps..

Planting Advice

- Fast growing and visually appealing tussock. Mass plant with other tufting and strappy leaf plants, like ***Dianella*** and ***Lomandra*** to fill in spaces in rockeries, around ponds, or in pots.
- Propagate from seed.
- Rejuvenate old tussocks every couple of years in autumn, with a hard prune or burn the leaves off, then water deeply and regularly.
- Attracts insect-eating and seed-eating birds, while the leaves provide nesting material. Good for frogs and lizards as gives shelter and cover from predators. Important caterpillar plant.
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils. Tolerates temporary inundation.
- Frost tolerant.

Ruby Saltbush

Enchylaena tomentosa

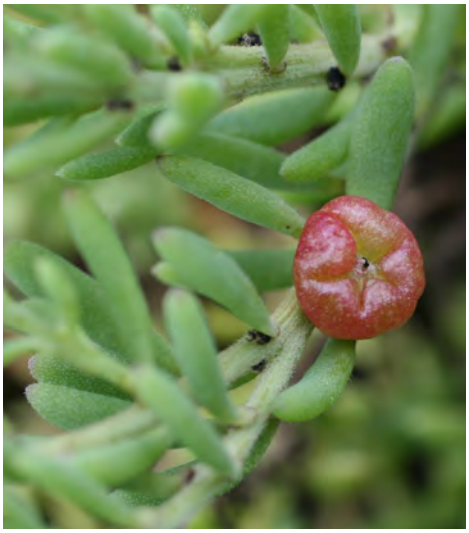
Identification

A sprawling groundcover to small shrub with downy branches and small, blue-green, succulent foliage. Has insignificant greenish flowers that develop into green, fleshy berries all year round, and their ripening to a yellow, orange or red colour peaks over summer.

Status in Hume City

Widespread in the grasslands and woodlands of Hume City, and is recorded in over 60 Nature Conservation Reserves. A typical example of a “bird halo” species that establishes beneath trees as birds pass ingested seeds while sitting on the branches.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering									•	•	•	
Seed Collection	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•



Size

High: 10 - 50 centimetre
Wide: 50 centimetre - 1 metre

Indigenous Cultural Use

Berries are edible, sweet and slightly salty. Leaves can be cooked as a vegetable substitute.

Planting Advice

- Great groundcover plant for growing under trees, in rock gardens, and in tubs.
- Fast growing and works well as a living green mulch to suppress weeds.
- A very hardy plant requiring little maintenance. Apply small amounts of native plant fertilser or compost to encourage growth. Responds well to pruning.
- Habitat plant for fruit-eating lizards and birds, and fruits also collected by ants.
- Drought tolerant. Very adaptable as grows in range of soils, and tolerates poor soils and some salinity.

Small-leaved Clematis, Old Man's Beard

Clematis microphylla

Identification

A bushy climber growing up other plants, or rambling across the ground, with slender, tangled stems. Leaves have an opposite arrangement on the stem and leaflets are divided in groups of three. Plants are either male or female, and the masses of star-shaped male flowers or tubular-shaped female flowers are both cream in colour. Female plants produce feathery, white seed-heads, and the mature plump, brown seeds will come loosely away.

Status in Hume City

Found in open forests, woodlands, grasslands and streamside vegetation. Is present in much remnant native vegetation around Hume City, being recorded at 50 Nature Conservation Reserves.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering							•	•	•	•	•	
Seed Collection									•	•	•	•

Size

High: 0.5 metre - 5 metre
Wide: Is variable in growth.

Indigenous Cultural Use

A widely used plant for food, medicine, fibre, and tools. Young roots eaten raw. The thick taproot can be roasted or knead into a dough to be cooked. Leaf poultices used to treat skin irritations but can blister the skin if left on too long. Leaves crushed and inhaled to relieve headaches. Root fibres woven into string, while the base of the stem used as axe hafts.

Planting Advice

- A great plant for screens or low fences, as it flowers on mass for a long period, followed by attractive fluffy seedheads.
- The tangled growth provides nesting sites for birds and fluffy seeds nesting material. The perfumed winter flowers attract a variety of insects, which become food for small insect-eating birds.
- Propagate easily by seed or stem cuttings.
- Tolerates very dry conditions and frosts.
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils.

Purple Coral Pea, False Sarsparilla

Hardenbergia violacea

Identification

A vigourous creeper or wiry scrambler with long twining stems and broad, leathery, dark green, and heavily-veinated leaves. Long sprays of 10 to 30 purple pea-shaped flowers, with bright green and white centres, provide an attractive mass flowering over winter. Hard-coated seeds are produced in flat, leathery, dark brown to blackish pods..

Status in Hume City

Found in grasslands, woodlands, and forests. Now occurs naturally only in two Nature Conservation Reserves in Craigieburn and Sunbury. Is widely used in revegetation and landscaping projects.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Flowering						•	•	•	•	•	•	
Seed Collection	•							•	•	•	•	•

Size

High: Variable, up to 3 metre
Wide: Variable

Indigenous Cultural Use

The flowers used as a source of dye, while a pleasant sweet tea can be made from infusing the leaves in boling water.

Planting Advice

- Note that non-indigenous cultivars like “Happy Wanderer” or other coloured flowering forms can hybridise with local wild remnant plants.
- Adaptable, attractive plant can be used as a groundcover, screen, or to cover an embankment.
- Prune back after flowering. Becomes woody with age and lives up to ten years.
- Propagate by cuttings or scarified seeds.
- Attracts butterflies, native bees, and insect-eating birds. Birds may nest in it when a dense climber.
- Prefers moist, well-drained soils.

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